GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3133
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2017
Toll-free Helpline Numbers
Birla Shri Om;Joshi Shri Chandra Prakash;Ranjan Smt. Ranjeet;Sahu Shri Chandu Lal

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether for redressal of consumer complaints, the Government has introduced 49 helplines through which consumers can register their complaints on Mobile Phones from anywhere, if so, the total number of complaints received so far through these helplines along with the action taken thereon;
(b) whether the Government proposes to increase the number of said helplines and if so, the details thereof along with the names of States where these helplines are working at present;
(c) whether the Government has taken note of the observation of the Standing Committee that toll-free helpline numbers are not helpful in solving the day to day problems being faced by the consumers and that such toll-free numbers are usually not responsive to the needs of the users and most of the time calls on such numbers go unattended to by the authorities, if so, the reasons for the prevailing situation and the steps taken by the Government to punish the authorities responsible for neglect;
(d) the steps taken by the Government to streamline the functioning of these helpline numbers so as to make them functional in the interest of the consumers; and
(e) whether the Government proposes to modernise the consumer courts and if so, the details thereof along with the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (e) : The Department of Consumer Affairs runs a National Consumer Helpline (NCH) with a toll free number 1800-11-4000 and a short code 14404. The number of Desks of this helpline has been increased from 14 to 60. The Department has also launched an integrated Grievance Redressal portal 'INGRAM' to enable consumers to lodge their grievances. In addition, a mobile application 'Consumer' has also been launched enabling consumers to lodge their complaints through this App. During 2016, 245867 numbers of complaints were received in the NCH. The complaints received through the NCH are forwarded to the Ministries/Departments concerned, Regulators concerned and the companies for redressal and NCH monitors the progress from the backend. In addition, the Helpline has also entered into MoUs with Companies under convergence programme, through which NCH closely monitors the dispute redressal process in collaboration with designated nodal officers of the Companies. In the year 2016, 86106 complaints pertained to the convergence companies out which 64806 have been partially/ fully resolved.
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